



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES

Tuesday, January 10, 2012
11:06 a.m.
Regional Council Chamber
150 Frederick Street, Kitchener

Present were: Chair S. Strickland, L. Armstrong, J. Brewer, T. Cowan, D. Craig, R. Deutschmann, T. Galloway, J. Haalboom, B. Halloran, R. Kelterborn, G. Lorentz, C. Millar, J. Mitchell, K. Seiling and C. Zehr

Members absent: J. Wideman

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST UNDER THE *MUNICIPAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT*

None declared.

REPORTS – Social Services

b) SS-12-001, Funeral Rates for 2012

David Dirks, Director, Employment and Income Support, referred to a [supplemental memo](#) containing information about what other municipalities fund; this was distributed at the meeting and a copy is appended to the original minutes. He summarized and defined the two (2) types of funerals funded by the Region, as well as the maximum amount funded, the funding formulas for both types, and the proposal being made by the Waterloo Region Funeral Directors. He provided an overview of the four (4) options available to Regional Councillors, as outlined in the report.

D. Dirks responded to Committee questions regarding the funding formulas for the cost-share program with the provincial ministry, the cost of cremation and the current practice for paying for funeral costs for indigent persons.

S. Strickland advised that he and Councillor Galloway met with the area funeral directors to respond to their concerns and learned that area municipalities don't have a reduced rate for funerals for persons in receipt of Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Plan benefits or those with low income levels.

In response to a Committee question about the potential savings noted in the staff report, Lee Parent, Manager, Budgets & Financial Services, advised that the projected savings are based on the increased amount request made by the funeral directors and not the current rate. The Committee conveyed its concern for consistent standards of service for persons with low income, regardless of which funding rate the Region determines to approve. There was brief discussion about the feasibility of a standard agreement with funeral homes and the responsibility of the Region to pay for indigent funerals.

In response to a Committee question about the provincial rate paid, D. Dirks advised that the rate is \$2250 and that it's unlikely that the Province of Ontario will set a revised rate. In response to a Committee inquiry about the definitions related to the report chart, under Financial

Implications, L. Parent provided details about each of the items. D. Dirks clarified that there is no legislated requirement for the Region to pay for funerals of those with low incomes but the Region has chosen to assume this responsibility. There is, however, a requirement to fund funerals for persons without surviving family.

Henry Walser, on behalf of the Region of Waterloo Funeral Directors, responded to Committee questions, including the standard handling of funerals for people with low incomes and the total number of funerals arranged, in addition to those where the Region is involved.

Rob Wintonyk, Erb & Good Family Funeral Home, summarized the process for funeral arrangements when the surviving family has limited funds and advised that local funeral directors consider it their ethical responsibility to assist families when financial hardship exists.

In response to a Committee inquiry about the amount being requested by the funeral homes, R. Wintonyk advised that the report provides a chart with phased-in increases over the next three (3) years and that the rate of \$5545 is the maximum fee for funeral arrangement options; some families may choose not to have a traditional service.

The Committee discussed the Region's current policy and the financial implications of approving the request made by the local funeral directors.

Mike Schuster, Commissioner, Social Services, stated that staff contacted six (6) large municipalities that the Region deals with; two (2) municipalities responded and both fund low income funerals.

Regional Chair K. Seiling agreed that the matter is sensitive and suggested that, prior to making a decision, comparator information be provided to Councillors, including details about the variety of funeral services being offered by large municipalities and adjacent municipalities.

MOVED by K. Seiling

SECONDED by G. Lorentz

THAT the Regional Municipality of Waterloo refer the matter of funeral rates for 2012 to the Budget Committee meeting planned for January 18, 2012.

CARRIED

INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE

a) Memo: [Ontario Works Caseload Report December 2011](#) was distributed at the meeting and received for information; a copy is appended to the original minutes.

M. Schuster advised that there is a slight increase in caseload but that it appears to be leveling off.

DELEGATIONS

a) Chris Riehl didn't appear before the Committee on the issue of the 2012 Extended Daycare Programs with the Waterloo Region District School Board.

REPORTS – Planning, Housing & Community Services

- a) P-12-007, Heritage Planning Advisory Committee – Highlights from 2011 and Plans for 2012

Rob Horne, Commissioner, Housing, Planning and Community Services, requested that the report be received for information but that the presentation be deferred to the next Committee meeting so that the highlights can be shared by a member of the Heritage Planning Advisory Committee.

INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE (Continued)

- b) Memo: National Housing Day 2011

Deb Schlichter, Director, Housing, presented an 8-minute video which showcases the stories of people who live in Community Housing within the Region and the impact that housing has had on their lives. The video is available for viewing on the Region's website.

The Committee commented on the positive impression of the anniversary event and extended appreciation to staff for working towards affordable housing programs for local residents and for organizing the event.

Received for information

OTHER BUSINESS

- a) Council Enquiries and Requests for Information Tracking List was received for information.

b) J. Haalboom provided historical background on the local heritage significance of the Regional Police building in Waterloo that will soon become a surplus property; she indicated that she's hopeful that the Region will engage in discussion with the City of Waterloo regarding a potential heritage designation.

NEXT MEETING – January 31, 2012**MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION**

MOVED by T. Cowan

SECONDED by J. Brewer

THAT a closed meeting of the Planning and Works Committee be held on Tuesday, January 10, 2012 immediately following the Community Services Committee, in the Waterloo County Room, in accordance with Section 239 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001, for the purposes of considering the following subject matters:

- a) proposed or pending acquisition of land in the City of Kitchener
- b) personal matters about identifiable individuals – committee appointments
- c) personal matters about identifiable individuals – committee appointments
- d) personal matters about identifiable individuals – committee appointments
- e) litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality

CARRIED

R. Deutschmann declared a conflict related to an item in closed session since he and his spouse are shareholders of corporations that have an interest in a property at 10 Duke Street West, Kitchener.

The open meeting adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

MOTION TO RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION

MOVED by C. Zehr

SECONDED by J. Brewer

THAT the meeting reconvene into Open session at 12:40 p.m.

CARRIED

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

COMMITTEE CHAIR, S. Strickland

COMMITTEE CLERK, S. Natolochny



SOCIAL SERVICES

Employment and Income Support

Region of Waterloo

Date: January 10, 2012

MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Community Services Committee

From: David Dirks, Director, Employment and Income Support

Copies: Michael Schuster, Commissioner, Social Services

Subject: **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING FUNERAL RATES**

File No: S09-01

In the report SS-12-001, Funeral Rates for 2012 dated January 10, 2012, staff provide information on a survey of municipalities concerning their 2011 Funeral Rates. Twenty-seven (27) municipalities responded. In the report staff provided the 2011 median rate for these 27 municipalities. In this memorandum staff further break down the information and look at the rates for the Region's usual comparators (Halton, Niagara, Peel, Hamilton, York, Ottawa, London, Windsor, Durham, Waterloo). The approved full service 2011 rate for the Region of Waterloo is \$2,775 (excluding applicable taxes).

Staff provide the range of rates (low to high), the median and the average cost for full services (excluding applicable taxes).

2011 Funeral Rates

| Comparators | Range | Median | Average |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------|---------|
| Full Survey (27) | \$2,250 - \$6,309 | \$2,836 | \$3,218 |
| Usual Comparators* | \$2,334 - \$3,937 | \$2,638 | \$2,758 |

*Windsor's 2010 rate has been used.

For further information please contact David Dirks, Director, Employment and Income Support at 519-883-2179: or ddirks@region.waterloo.on.ca



MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of Community Services Committee

From: David Dirks, Director, Employment and Income Support

Copies: Michael Schuster, Commissioner, Social Services

File No.: S09-80

Subject: **ONTARIO WORKS CASELOAD: DECEMBER 2011**

This memorandum is provided as information for members of Council. Employment & Income Support, Social Services with Finance monitors the Ontario Works (OW) caseload and expenditures on a monthly basis. Below is a chart summarizing the caseload at the end of December 2011 with comparisons to the months of November 2011 and December 2010 as well as September 2008.

Very briefly,

- The OW caseload at December 2011 was: 8,558
- The increase from November 2011 was: 52 (0.6%)
- The increase from December 2010 was: 30 (0.4%)
- The increase from September 2008 was: 2,266 (36%)

- Waterloo Region unemployment rate for December 2011 was: 6.6%
- Waterloo Region unemployment rate for December 2010 was: 7.4%

Ontario Works Caseload and Unemployment Rate

December 2011
Ontario Works Caseload

| December 2011 | November 2011 | December 2010 | % Change November to December | % Change Year to Year |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 8,558 | 8,506 | 8,528 | 0.6% | 0.4% |

Unemployment Rates – Seasonally Adjusted*

| | December 2011 | November 2011 | December 2010 | % Change November to December | % Change Year to Year |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Province | 7.7 | 7.9 | 8.1 | (2.5%) | (4.9%) |
| Waterloo Region | 6.6 | 6.8 | 7.4 | (2.9%) | (10.8%) |

*As revised by Statistics Canada

The caseload at year-end is almost exactly the same (two fewer cases) as at the beginning of the year (January 2011: 8, 560). The average caseload for the year was 8,700.

The provision of social assistance supports Focus Area 4 of the 2011-2014 Corporate Strategic Plan: Healthy and Inclusive Communities; Strategic Objective 4.1 (to) work collaboratively to reduce poverty.

If you have any questions or comments or for further information, please contact David Dirks at Phone: 519-883-2179 or dirksdav@region.waterloo.on.ca